



From the NIFA Communications Office

NIFA in the News – Week of March 26, 2012

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In the News

Obama administration announces \$35 million in new funding for biomass research and development initiative (Cypress Times 3/23). Thursday, the White House announced up to \$35 million over three years to support research and development in advanced biofuels, bioenergy and high-value biobased products. The projects funded through the Biomass Research and Development Initiative (BRDI)—a joint program through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Energy Department (DOE)—will help develop economically and environmentally sustainable sources of renewable biomass and increase the availability of renewable fuels and biobased products that can help replace the need for gasoline and diesel in vehicles and diversify our energy portfolio. [Link](#)

Cenusa lands \$25M USDA grant to develop big bluestem, Indian grass and switchgrass for biofuels (Biofuels Digest 3/26). In Iowa, Cenusa Bioenergy has received a five-year, \$25 million grant from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to grow native perennial grasses such as big bluestem, Indian grass and switchgrass on marginal lands as feedstock for bio-oil via. [Link](#)

Obama administration talks new funding for biomass research (Electric Light and Power 3/26). The White House announced up to \$35 million over three years to support research and development in advanced biofuels, bioenergy and high-value biobased products. The projects funded through the Biomass Research and Development Initiative — a joint program through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Energy Department — will help develop economically and environmentally sustainable sources of renewable biomass and increase the availability of renewable fuels and biobased products that can help replace the need for gasoline and diesel in vehicles and diversify our energy portfolio. [Link](#)

Fort Morgan teen Megan McMinn attends National 4-H Conference (Fort Morgan Times 3/26). Megan McMinn of Fort Morgan is in Washington, D.C., to attend the 2012 National 4-H Conference. National 4-H Conference creates an

experience for delegates to become more familiar with government, reinforce the rich history of 4-H and its valuable tie to Extension and the land-grant system and visit with leaders from USDA, NIFA (National Institute of Food and Agriculture) and the land-grant university system. [Link](#)

4-Hers Explore Youth Issues at National Conference (Wisconsin Ag Connection 3/27). Over 200 4-H members from across the country came to the nation's capital to make their voice heard as part of the 2012 National 4-H Conference, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Dr. Jill Biden, Second Lady of the United States, and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack addressed the delegates during the morning general session. "For almost 100 years, USDA and 4-H have partnered to produce some of our nation's best and brightest, including farmers and ranchers who have supported the American economy and put food on our tables," Vilsack said. [Link](#)

4-H Members Explore Issues Affecting Youth (Farm Futures 3/27). This week 200 4-H members from across the country came to the nation's capital to make their voice heard as part of the 2012 National 4-H Conference, sponsored by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Dr. Jill Biden, Second Lady of the United States, and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack addressed the delegates during the morning general session. [Link](#)

Minor crop groups rally against proposed IR-4 consolidation with USDA IPM programs (AgraNet 3/27). Minor and specialty crop growers and other stakeholders affiliated with the IR-4 Project are organizing opposition and writing to Congress in an effort to avoid USDA's proposed redirection of \$11.9 million in dedicated IR-4 funding toward consolidation with five integrated pest management (IPM) programs. [Link](#)

Apple, cherry growers asked to respond to important survey (Ag Weekly 3/27). Tree fruit growers in Washington, Michigan and New York will be receiving a survey from Haley Consulting Services asking growers about their horticultural practices and orchard characteristics. Responding to the survey is critical, as growers' responses will help guide the Solid Set Canopy Delivery System for Apples and Cherries, a two-year, USDA-funded project involving research from Washington State University, Cornell University and Michigan State University. The solid set canopy delivery system will be built into an orchard's trellis system in order to simultaneously deliver inputs orchard-wide. Currently, to protect an orchard from a pest outbreak, a worker must drive a tractor hauling a sprayer up and down between rows of trees. [Link](#)

Nutrition Facts: Students learn how to make healthy food choices (The Mountain Press 3/28). As part of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) educators with the University of Tennessee Extension were in the classroom at Catlettsburg Elementary School in the last few weeks, teaching students about healthy eating and food choices. [Link](#)

Wheat Growers Ask Congress to Preserve Ag Research Funds (Wisconsin Ag Connection 3/28). Wheat farmers, researchers, millers and bakers are in Washington, D.C. this week to deliver a message to Congress: there is no more to cut from federal funding for agriculture research. Fly-in participants are specifically asking Members to support the Administration's requests for \$1.103 billion in funding for ARS and \$325 million in funding for USDA's premier competitive grant programs, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. [Link](#)

No more left to cut in agriculture (Western Farm Press 3/29). Wheat farmers, researchers, millers and bakers were in Washington, D.C., to deliver a simple message to members of Congress: there is no more to cut from federal funding for agriculture research. Fly-in participants are specifically asking Members to support the Obama Administration's requests for \$1.103 billion in funding for ARS and \$325 million in funding for USDA's premier competitive grant programs, the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). [Link](#)

Published on March 30, 2012 / Jennifer Martin